



THE NATIONAL GRAND MUFTI OF AUSTRALIA



Speech by

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National Grand Mufti of Australia

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Australian Federation
of Islamic Councils



AFIC National
Sharia Board



الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على خاتم الأنبياء والمرسلين، سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين، أما بعد:

Firstly, permit me to thank his excellency the honourable Yab Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Bin Yaakob, Prime Minister of Malaysia for officiating this wonderful and most timely event.

Honrouable Yab Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Bin Yaakob, honourable Datuk Haji Idris bin Haji Ahmad, the Minister and Prime Minister's department, his excellency Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Abdul Kareem al-Issa, the honourable secretary general of RABITA, the honourable Dr Rateb Jneid, president of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC), distinguished Ulama, learned national Muftis , international speakers, my friends and colleagues in Da'wa, brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen:

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

A cursory glance to our diverse Ummah reveals the sad reality of divided nations with linguistic, racial (often tribal) and cultural barriers that are often used to stir up national pride rather than unity.

In pursuit of unity, we often recite: **وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ**

" "

وَأَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ ۚ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ (Al Qur'an 3:103)

(And remember the blessing of Allah upon you when you were enemies, so He brought your hearts together and so you became through His blessing: "Brothers").

We emphasize parts of the Hadith Sharif:

وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا،

(Be brothers in your devotion to Allah)

We again rarely emphasize the rest of the hadith:

لَا تَحَاسَدُوا، وَلَا تَنَاجَشُوا، وَلَا تَبَاغَضُوا، وَلَا تَدَابَرُوا، وَلَا يَبِغْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا، الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لَا يَظْلِمُهُ، وَلَا يَخْذُلُهُ، وَلَا يَحْقِرُهُ، التَّقْوَى هَاهُنَا -وَيُشِيرُ إِلَى صَدْرِهِ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ- بِحَسَبِ أَمْرٍ مِنَ الشَّرِّ أَنْ يَحْقِرَ أَخَاهُ الْمُسْلِمَ، كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ: دَمُهُ، وَمَالُهُ، وَعِرْضُهُ. أَخْرَجَهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

(don't begrudge each other, don't insult each other, don't hate each other, don't backbite each other, don't steal each other's commercial dealings ... the Muslim is the brother of the Muslim, he does not oppress him, he does not let him down, he does not belittle him ... It is a terrible evil to belittle your Muslim brother, the Muslim has sanctities in his person, his wealth and his honour).

AFIC's Da'wa and Iftaa Manager Sheikh Mohammad Trad recently published a two-part paper on the issue of unity, he rightly outlined that unity is an outcome of having a shared purpose. In reading and approving this paper, we at AFIC stressed upon the words of Allah Ta'ala:

وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

(He (Allah) brought their hearts together, had you spent all that is in the earth, you would not have brought their hearts together, however, Allah brought them together, He is Exalted, Wise).

These words of the Almighty Allah illustrate to us that unity is an outcome, it is achieved when our hearts share a common goal. These words also reveal to us that if we find ourselves divided, then we must be alarmed that our hearts are not aiming for the same objective. That we have fallen victim to the base desires of competing in worldly pursuits rather than our love for Allah and obeisance to His Wise guidance.

On the road to our desired outcome of unity, we must put before our eyes the words of our beloved prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings upon him:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ. رواه البخاري ومسلم.

(None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself).

لا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَلَدِهِ، وَوَالِدِهِ، وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ. رواه البخاري.

(None of you truly believes until I am loved by him more than his son and his father and all the people).

This event nobly aims to promote peace, harmony, unity and diversity amongst the Muslim ulama across the world and to develop a shared civilized vision to consolidate the values of moderation and unity in human societies while countering the threat of extremist thought towards the Other and to transform contrived conflicts into understanding, cooperation and solidarity through practical programs, initiatives and recommendations.

Our stated aims have both captured part of the problem and hinted at solutions for which we have long aspired.

Honourable Prime Minister, distinguished Ulama, my dear brothers and sisters – Sincerity of intention – True devotion to Allah – Selflessly serving our fellow human beings are key to bringing salvation to humanity, they are key to achieving unity and they are key to creating world peace and promoting balance in this world. We must always remind ourselves that the blessings of position, skills and knowledge are blessings entrusted to us to employ into the خدمة (service) of humanity, these blessings are also a test, do we allow them to inflate our ego, or do we humbly employ them in devotion to Allah and for the easing of life's burden and complexities to help promote peace, understanding, respect and love in this world?

The choice is ours – let's join together to make this world a better place.

Thank you for this opportunity to share what you have taught me over the years, wassalamu Alaykum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh

وعلیکم السلام ورحمة الله وبرکاته

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